

Victims in the Writing of Athol Fugard

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ALTHOUGH ATHOL FUGARD, South Africa's leading playwright, eschews "the label of political writer,"¹ most of his writings make strong political statements. In a review of three of his plays — *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*, *The Island*, and *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act* — Julian Mitchell finds that "the truth being told is so saturated in politics that politics never have to be mentioned."² Zakes Mokae, the South African actor who recently originated the role of Sam in "*MASTER HAROLD*" . . . and the boys, believes "anything coming out of South Africa is automatically political."³ Margaret Munro feels that, in a sense, "South African literature could be said to be a metaphor for the larger betrayal embodied in *apartheid*."⁴ In most of his plays and in his one novel characters who are victims of the system of apartheid insisted upon by the minority white government embody Fugard's political statements. The victims come from all three major races inhabiting South Africa — black, coloured, and white. Out of forty-six characters in twelve plays,⁵ twenty-four are black, six are coloured, and sixteen are white; most of the characters in *Tsotsi*, Fugard's novel, are black.

The brothers, Morris and Zachariah, in *The Blood Knot* are typical victims of the system of apartheid and bigotry pictured by Fugard.⁶ The brothers personify the racial conflict of South Africa; Morris is light coloured, so light coloured that he has passed for white, while Zach's skin is darker. The darker brother, in spite of himself, admires Morris's whiteness: ". . . you're pretty . . . a pretty white,"⁷ and enjoys the idea that the white woman he has accidentally acquired as a pen-pal believes he is white also, but he realizes he can never even meet her: "The whole, rotten,

stinking lot is all because I'm black!" (*BK*, 62). Morris believes the government considers it a crime for a coloured man even to think of a white woman, and that "All they need for evidence is a man's dreams" (*BK*, 59). When Morrie asks Zach what he would do if he did meet Ethel and her white relatives subsequently attacked him physically, Zach replies that he would call for the police, and Morrie counters this response with the belief that the police are on the side of the whites, not the coloureds. When they believe the pen-pal is actually coming for a visit, they begin to prepare for Morris, who sees himself as a Judas betraying his brother, to meet her as a white Zachariah. In addition to wearing "white" clothes, Morris must act and sound like a white man. The most difficult pretense has to do with the eyes because "They [white people] look at things differently" (*BK*, 74), meaning that a white person's eyes project courage instead of the fear reflected in the eyes of coloured people. In an ugly parody of the relationship between white and coloured, Morris and Zach pretend that Morris is a white man who is visiting the park where Zach stands in the sun at the gate to keep black children away. As Morris gets into his role, he castigates his brother by calling him names, such as *Swartgat* ["black arse"]. The name-calling is especially cruel since we have previously been made aware of Zach's sensitivity at being called names. The future for Morrie and Zach is bleak; they have only each other and their racist "game." Robert J. Green has called the characters' confrontation in *The Blood Knot* "a microcosm of South Africa's explosive racial situation."⁸

Morris is not really correct when he tells Zach that the police are on the side of the white members of South African society. He would have been more accurate in saying the police are on the side of those obeying the laws of the apartheid government. In *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*, a title which summarizes the action of the play, the white librarian Frieda Joubert and the coloured location school principal Errol Philander, who have been lovers for about a year, are arrested after they are reported to the police. Fear is a common emotion experienced by the victims of Fugard's world, and Frieda and Errol are no exceptions; Frieda is afraid the entire time she

spends with her coloured friend, and Errol, who has had to suppress his pride by coming to her back door after dark, is justifiably terrified when the policeman discovers the lovers together. Mitchell has pointed out that "even before the lovers are discovered, their affair is ruined by the fear in which it is conducted."⁹ The contemporary action of *Statements*, like that of *The Island*, parallels the ancient conflict between individual rights and the laws of government. Under the law Frieda Joubert and Errol Philander are forbidden to love each other. Government has interjected itself into the most private aspect of their lives, but in South Africa Frieda is bound to her white skin just as the coloured man is bound to his neighbourhood in Bontrug.¹⁰ Philander reacts with amazement to the fact that "Life . . . is three billion years old" (*Statements*, 83); the inclusion of this fact reminds us how little progress humankind has made since the beginning of life. It also shows just how insignificant the relationship of the lovers is when measured against three billion years of life. The final irony expressed by the coloured man is that although he is nothing (in historical terms and to the present government), he is arrested. As long as he does not break the law, the government treats him as nothing, but when he does break the law, he suddenly becomes *something* (not necessarily *somebody*). Derek Cohen sees this play as "a total image of the flinty cruelty of South Africa's institutionalized racialism,"¹¹ and Mshengu feels that "By showing the human effects of such [racial] legislation he [Fugard] has effectively demonstrated its inhuman nature" in most of his plays.¹²

The Island, devised by Fugard in collaboration with John Kani and Winston Ntshona for whom the characters are named, shares the basic conflict of the individual versus the government with *Statements* and the concept of brotherhood with *The Blood Knot*. John and Winston, who are in prison, are not blood brothers, but they are political brothers, belonging to an organization whose motto is "*Nyana we Sizwe*" ["Brother of the Land"]. In *The Island* the tension in Sophocles's *Antigone* is juxtaposed against the situation in modern-day South Africa. The conflict between individual conscience and individual rights (symbolized by Antigone, whom the prisoners see as innocent although she

pleads guilty) and governmental decrees (symbolized by Creon) corresponds to the conflict between the individual conscience and rights of black prisoners and white government. John and Winston perform the roles of Creon and Antigone in a concert for their fellow prisoners, and, while Winston is not pleased to be playing Antigone with a wig and breasts because he knows the audience will laugh, John convinces him the message the play conveys is worth it: "But who cares . . . as long as they laugh in the beginning and listen at the end" (*I*, 62).

The Coat, which "was evolved during a series of improvisations" (*Coat*, 7), shows the effect imprisonment of black men have on their families. The play is based on an actual happening in which a man sentenced to prison on Robben Island sends his coat home to his wife. The Serpent Players of New Brighton imagined a few scenes in which the coat functions as a symbol of her husband to the woman. Only when faced with eviction from her home would she sell the coat.

Prisoners are not the only persons in Fugard's world who leave their families. There is also the man from the country who journeys to the city in search of a job so he can support the family left behind. These victims include the title character in *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* (like *The Island* devised by Fugard with Kani and Ntshona), Gumboot Dhlamini in *Tsotsi*, and Tobias and Moses in *No-Good Friday*. Obligatory passbooks compound the problems of these and many other South Africans. Sizwe Bansi, for instance, gives up his name, emblematic of his manhood, so he can "die" because a stamp, indicating that he has only three days to leave Port Elizabeth, is placed in his passbook. Bunti, who had trouble getting the proper stamps even though he was born in the area, tells Bansi how "simple" the solution to his problem would be if he knew a white man who could offer him work:

You talk to the white man, you see, and ask him to write a letter saying he's got a job for you. You take that letter from the white man and go back to King William's Town, where you show it to the Native Commissioner there. The Native Commissioner in King William's Town reads that letter from the white man in Port Elizabeth who is ready to give you the job. He then writes a letter back to the Native Commissioner in Port Elizabeth. So you come back here with the two letters. Then the Native Commis-

sioner in Port Elizabeth reads the letter from the Native Commissioner in King William's Town together with the first letter from the white man who is prepared to give you a job, and he says when he reads the letters: Ah yes, this man Sizwe Bansi can get a job. So the Native Commissioner in Port Elizabeth then writes a letter which you take with the letters from the Native Commissioner in King William's Town and the white man in Port Elizabeth, to the Senior Officer at the Labour Bureau, who reads all the letters. Then he will put the right stamp in your book and give you another letter from himself which together with the letters from the white man and the two Native Affairs Commissioners, you take to the Administration Office here in New Brighton and make an application for Residence Permit, so that you don't fall victim of raids again. Simple (SB, 25-26)

Bansi does not know any white men, so the solution to his problem is not "simple." Instead he takes the passbook and the identity of a dead man; Sizwe Bansi dies and is reborn Robert Zwelinzima so that he may continue to live in the city and work.

Hope of returning home from the city is thwarted in Fugard's portrait of this world. In *Tsotsi* Dhlamini commutes to and from work because, as is common, he was not permitted to live in the city where he worked. He is brutally murdered — "Butcher worked the [bicycle] spoke up and into his heart"¹³ — by a street gang on the train, ironically only one week before he planned to return home. The usually careful Dhlamini, cheerful at the prospect of seeing his family again, makes three mistakes which cause him to stand out from the crowd at the railway station: he smiles, he wears a brilliant red tie, and he opens his pay packet to get his fare. The black street gangs, victims themselves of the South African system of government, in turn victimize other blacks.¹⁴ The same kind of victimization is found in *No-Good Friday* when the characters pay money to a black bully and his fellow thugs to protect them from the kind of attack that was made on Dhlamini. As Fugard has written, these people are doubly threatened by "white laws and black gangsters."¹⁵ In *No-Good Friday* Moses, like Sizwe Bansi and Gumboot Dhlamini, writes his family letters full of hope. He has been writing these letters for ten years and is seemingly no nearer his dream than he was in the beginning, while Tobias has just arrived from the Eastern Transvaal and is killed by the "protecting" gangsters because he

fails to comprehend their demand for money. Tobias's dream is destroyed before it has barely had a chance to live. As Sizwe Bansi says, "A black man stay out of trouble? Impossible, Buntu. Our skin is trouble" (*SB*, 43). Patrick goes so far in *Nongogo* as to declare that "they should make it that we blacks can't have babies."¹⁶

The leader of the four hoodlums who attack Dhlamini in *Tsotsi* is the title character or David, which is his real name. He is the protagonist in the novel, and the government is the antagonist. David's early years were pleasant, symbolized by the novelist in images of light. When we first see him, however, he is deep in darkness; he has no memory of his childhood, and the innocence and salvation of those early years are lost. His fall from grace at the age of ten was caused by the trauma of having his mother taken from him by the police in a raid. He never saw her again. The disappearance of his mother and his father's subsequent hysterical anger left David so wounded that for many years the events were erased from his mind. Only certain images — including a yellow dog, a spider, and damp newspapers — flash through his mind as relics of his past life. David's loss of his mother is paralleled in the novel by Miriam Ngidi's loss of her husband, who "went to work and didn't come back" (*T*, 100).

Unlike most of Fugard's victims, Tsotsi transcends his situation by emerging a hero. Before the narrative ends, he has experienced a kind of conversion or restoration of at least a partial state of grace. The steps toward his return to the light from the darkness begin with his fellow-hoodlum Boston's telling Tsotsi that he must have a soul because everybody has one. The turning point comes when a woman thrusts a baby upon him. The baby becomes a new talisman — his knife was the old one — in which he senses his past self. The baby represents the David Tsotsi once was; in fact, he gives the baby his own name. The climactic step in Tsotsi's salvation comes after he, an emotional cripple, has pursued the physically crippled Morris Tshabalala in order to rob and murder him. When he catches his victim, Tsotsi suddenly realizes that he has a choice: he *may* or *may not* kill. The fact that there is an alternative to killing the man is a revelation for Tsotsi because a black person in South Africa has few choices.

Cohen explains: "The black man has his role chosen for him, and for the whole of his life he is a victim of that choice in whose making he had no part."¹⁷ The crippled beggar arouses Tsotsi's hidden sympathy, which is an extension of his feelings for the baby, and the sympathy is the key which unlocks his memory. With the restoration of his full memory the former Tsotsi starts on a mystical quest for God — something or someone he does not understand. David dies when he tries to save the baby from the bulldozers in the slum clearance at the end of the novel. He has grown from the Tsotsi who took lives to the man who spared a life and tries to save another; the child who "died" when his mother was abruptly taken from him is reborn.

In an attempted act of communion David offers Boston sour-milk and bread, but Boston refuses to participate in the "sacrament." However, David does succeed in participating in a symbolic communion when he accepts Isaiah's tin cup of tea. There is also a kind of salvation for Lena in *Boesman and Lena*. There is a faint glimmer of hope for this woman who demands, "I want my life. Where's it?" (*BL*, 254). She finds some meaning in life in her relationship with Outa, the old black man. Both Lena and Boesman are prejudiced against him because he is black and not brown or coloured like them. Although she calls him names, just as white people no doubt call her names, she does show compassion and feels a kinship with him. Her partial salvation is celebrated in a symbolic communion — called "Lena's Mass" by the playwright (*Introduction*, xxiv) — in which she and Outa share her tea and bread: "*Hotnot* and a *Kaffer* got no time for apartheid on a night like this" (*BL*, 279). Lena has prepared us for her religious experience through an earlier reference to Christ, "Somewhere else a donkey looked at it [pain]" (*BL*, 265).

Lena's salvation may be slight, but there is no salvation at all for Boesman. Fugard tells us that what Boesman "really hates is himself" (*Introduction*, xxiii), and he hates himself because he is kept from becoming a complete man by apartheid. Persecuted by the white race, Boesman, like other of Fugard's characters, makes scapegoats out of others, in this case Outa and Lena, especially Lena; as Willie says in *No-Good Friday*, "Everybody wants a backside to kick in this country" (*NGF*, 131). Boesman is cruel

to the old black man possibly because he is jealous that Lena seems to find some comfort and companionship with him. Robert L. Berner believes Boesman and Lena are "taking out on each other the rage and frustration which they cannot express against the world."¹⁸ Like practically all of Fugard's characters, Boesman and Lena are "victims of a common, a shared predicament, and of each other" (*Introduction*, xxiii).

The setting of *Boesman and Lena* reflects the characters' suffering. Like Fugard's other coloured and black characters, Boesman and Lena live in squalor. The couple make their way from one shantytown (Korsten, where *The Blood Knot* is set, is one of them) to another after the whites have demolished their latest shack with a bulldozer similar to the one that brought the wall down on David at the end of *Tsotsi*. During the play Boesman builds their temporary shelter for the night out of odds and ends, including pieces of wood, corrugated iron, and an old car door. Their odyssey from squalid town and miserable shack to squalid town and miserable shack is emblematic of the numb condition of their lives. As Frank Levy concludes, "time and habit have dulled the poignancy of their awareness, their consciousness of justification or cause."¹⁹ They do not remember which town followed which; the towns become blurs just as their lives are blurred.

In *Nongogo* Queeny does not wander from place to place but lives in her shebeen which is expensively furnished according to the standards of its location, yet it is characterized by "a suggestion of slovenliness" (*Non.*, 59). While considerably preferable to the settings of other plays — such as *Boesman and Lena*, *The Blood Knot*, and *No-Good Friday* — the setting of *Nongogo* is, nevertheless, depressing, in part because it is an illegal drinking establishment. It is the symbol that Queeny has worked her way up the hierarchy of unsavoury professions, from prostitute to proprietor of a shebeen.

Queeny has never been released from the guilt she feels as a result of abandoning her young brothers and sisters after their mother died and for becoming a prostitute to make the money to finance the shebeen. She also feels guilty about serving people like Patrick, a man with a large family, but running a shebeen is

good business because these natives are "always thirsty" (*Non.*, 64). Drinking is obviously a way of temporarily escaping the reality of their unhappy lives. Queeny is happy for the first time after she meets Johnny because he treats her like the decent woman she wants to be. For once she can hope for a respectable future with a man and a home, but this is not to be because Johnny is also a victim of South African society who, too, was forced into a kind of prostitution when at the age of seventeen he worked in the mines and lived in the compound where there were no women, and the stronger men took advantage of him sexually. This has traumatized him to the extent that he cannot associate with the "unclean" Queeny after he learns of her past. Both Johnny and Queeny hate themselves for what they have had to do to survive in their world, and Johnny cannot forgive.

Willie in *No-Good Friday* wonders if he and the other members of his race, such as Johnny and Queeny, have not helped make their world what it is:

The world I live in is the way it is not in spite of me but because of me. You think we're just poor suffering come-to-Jesus-at-the-end-of-it-all black men and that the world's all wrong and against us so what the hell. Well I'm not so sure of that any more. I'm not so sure because I think we helped to make it, the way it is.
(*NGF*, 160-61)

Willie, a bright, thoughtful young man who has despaired of life and who has seen his illusions and dreams fade, is angered by the deference of his black people to the white minority. He is aware that his heroic acts of attending Tobias's funeral and reporting the murder to the authorities will go only a very small way toward alleviating suffering in his country, but his shame for not trying to help Tobias forces him to act. He, like David in *Tsotsi*, will die as a result of his good deeds. In Fugard's world the heroic is victim along with the not-so-heroic.

As was seen in *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*, it is not only black and coloured characters who become victims under the system of apartheid, but white characters suffer also. Suffering of members of all three races is explored in Fugard's latest plays — *A Lesson from Aloes* and "*MASTER HAROLD*" . . . and the boys. Fugard has been quoted as saying

that "‘At one level . . . [*A Lesson from Aloes*] is about survival. Survival in South Africa, and choosing to stay here or choosing to go. And if you choose to go, do you choose to go physically or do you choose to go mad?’"²⁰ In this three-character play the Afrikaner Piet chooses to stay (like the author himself), the coloured Steve chooses to go to England, and the white Gladys goes mad. Steve along the Piet, like the two men in *The Island*, rebelled against the government, and an informer — incorrectly identified by many as Piet — leads the officials to Steve, and he is banned and jailed. Although he is a qualified mason and bricklayer, he will never again be able to practice his trade in South Africa. Realizing he will never be free in his native country, he leaves. It is a painful decision for him, especially painful because once he leaves he is forbidden ever to return. Relocation is a common occurrence in the land of apartheid. Steve's family had been moved out of his childhood home because the community was "declared white,"²¹ and Steve's father lost his home, his money, and the sea where he loved to fish, events which led the old man to the conclusion that "Ons geslag is verkeerd" ["Our generation . . . our race is a mistake"] (*Lesson*, 20). Although the authorities have laughed away Steve's manhood and he has lost his country, he has maintained his sanity and has his wife and children with him.

Gladys, who did not share Steve and Piet's interest in "the cause," loses everything of importance, her sanity and the relationship with her husband, after a raid by the authorities on their home. In an act of violation or a kind of rape, they confiscate her diaries, which she considered so personal that they were an extension of her very self. Munro sees the aloes of the title "as grotesque thorny phallic symbols opposed to female secretiveness in this context."²² Gladys summarizes her own suffering for Steven:

I accept Steven that I am just a white face on the outskirts of your terrible life, but I'm in the middle of mine and yours is just a brown face on the outskirts of that. Do you understand what I'm saying? I've got my own story. I don't need yours. I've discovered hell for myself. It might be hard for you to accept

Steven, but you are not the only one who has been hurt. Politics and blackskins don't make the only victims in this country.

(*Lesson, 22*)

Piet is also a victim, but he survives, in a sense, the loss of a best friend and a wife. He is left with both his native country and his sanity. Like the symbolic title aloe, a succulent plant capable of enduring drought, Piet has paid a price, but he has endured the drought of emotion and understanding. He and his aloes remain, while Steven leaves for England and Gladys leaves for the mental institution.

Zakes Mokae has summarized "*MASTER HAROLD*" . . . and *the boys* as being, in part,

about a young cat dealing with two servants, underline, capital letters on servants. Sam and Willie are older, but they have to put up with Hally's treatment of them as boys. It's like they're not justified in being angry, like anger belongs to certain people. So Hally can be angry about his personal problems. But Sam just has to deal.²³

This play demonstrates just how invidious and permeating bigotry can be. The two black servants, "the boys" of the title, are victims of the dominating white society, but Hally or "*MASTER HAROLD*," a white seventeen-year-old boy, is also a victim, especially of his parents' bigotry. We soon learn that Hally has a warmer relationship with Sam and Willie than with his own father; in fact, Sam is a substitute father to the boy. Hally is an intelligent person who has good rapport with the black men. He appears to be considerate of them, mentioning, for example, how he and Sam used to let Willie win at chess so he would continue to play with them. Hally does order the men around, but they are, after all, employees, and he is the "*Baas*." Hally has shared his education with Sam, who possesses a very good memory, while Sam, realizing the boy's crippled, alcoholic father is no model, tries to guide Hally toward manhood. Hally both loves and hates his father. The boy obviously feels a great sense of guilt over preferring the black Sam to his own white father, and this guilt, fed by the racial prejudice of his father, causes him to turn against Sam. Hally's attempts to humiliate Sam result only in self humiliation. He first humiliates himself by

demanding that Sam call him "Master Harold" instead of "Hally," and follows this command with the ultimate humiliation: he spits in Sam's face. Blood ties, skin colour in particular, cause Hally to reject Sam, the man who took the boy kite flying because "I wanted you to look up, be proud of something, of yourself."²⁴ The events of the afternoon leave their marks on Hally, who now has more guilt to expiate. The play, autobiographical to a large degree, is an attempt on the part of the playwright to expiate, partially at least, his own guilt over spitting in the face of the real Sam Semela.²⁵

Characters suffer in the few plays by Fugard in which all of the dramatis personae are white, but their suffering is only indirectly, if at all, related to the system of apartheid and racism. The title character of *Dimetos*, the only Fugard play which is not explicitly set in Southern Africa, is a victim of his passion for his niece. *People Are Living There*, which the playwright has called "an aberrant work" (*Introduction*, xi), focuses on white characters who spell "Life with a capital F" (*People*, 123), and mention other races occasionally in a demeaning way: Zulus are tough, "some old Coolie shop," "Here we have Natives to do the dirty work. You're saved by your white skin" (*People*, 108, 111, 154). *Hello and Goodbye*, a play about a crippled father who emotionally cripples his children, parallels the relationship of Hally and his father in "*MASTER HAROLD*" without the overt racial conflict.

The victims in Fugard's writing cope with their situations in various ways. We have seen how Willie in *No-Good Friday*, David in *Tsotsi*, and, to some degree, Lena in *Boesman and Lena* elevate themselves by caring for others. Brotherhood is a source of survival for some. The relationship of Morris and Zach in *The Blood Knot* is the only thing rendering their situation bearable. The concept, "brother," has led Morris, who has pretended to be white, back to his darker-skinned brother and keeps him there. Standing up for the brotherhood of their race led John and Winston to prison in *The Island*, and it is in the spirit of brotherhood that Buntu, "whose name means 'human kindness,'" ²⁶ helps Sizwe change his identity in *Sizwe Banzi Is Dead*. Boesman and Lena find sad comfort in their companionship.

Characters cope by dreaming and imagining. A major dream, that of the country man of finding a city job and returning home with money to provide for his family, has already been mentioned. The brothers in *The Blood Knot*, imitating George and Lennie in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, save money to buy their dream farm. Morris and Zachariah recapture their youth by imagining they are riding in a car through a blizzard of butterflies, while Winston and John pretend to make telephone calls to friends outside the prison in *The Island*. Errol dreams of beginning life anew in *Statements*, and, in encouraging a little boy to expand the two-room house to five rooms in the drawing he was making in the sand, he instructs the child in dreaming.

Flying birds and dancing are two symbols of escape used by Fugard. In *The Blood Knot* birds—white birds—represent release for Morris: "But the mystery of my life, man, is the birds. Why, they come and settle here and fly around so white and beautiful on the water and never get dirty from it too!" (*BK*, 14). Birds stand for freedom for Lena, too, in *Boesman and Lena*, but she is passionately jealous of them: "Tomorrow they'll hang up there in the wind and laugh. We'll be in the mud. I hate them" (*BL*, 240). In *Tsotsi* David dreams that his father is a bird carrying him and his mother "away to better times" (*T*, 112), but the father does not stay aloft long. Dancing is the major symbol in "*MASTER HAROLD*": "it's beautiful because that is what we want life to be like" (*Harold*, 45).

Not all of the escapes are pleasant for these victims. In *A Lesson from Aloes*, for example, Gladys's escape from reality is into madness. Finally, some Fugard characters, like those of other modern playwrights such as August Strindberg and Edward Albee, suggest that the only escape is death. In *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead* Buntu says, "The only time we'll find peace is when they dig a hole for us and press our face into the earth" (*SB*, 28), and Lena comments that Outa's "troubles are over" after he dies (*BL*, 287).

Fugard copies his characters and their situations directly from the life he knows in South Africa; he has said that his mission "is to witness as truthfully as I can the nameless and destitute of one little corner of the world."²⁷ According to his writings, there

is very little happiness in that "one little corner," and what happiness is there becomes overshadowed by suffering and fear. There are no truly happy endings in any of this writer's works. Perhaps, he will write happier endings when the life he imitates in his writing is happier. Fugard's plays and novel are political statements in which characters are presented as victims of the theory and practice of apartheid. The implied major solution to these characters' problems is, of course, reforming the attitude upon which apartheid is based.

NOTES

- ¹ Steve Lawson, "Fugard Tries a Lighter Touch," *New York Times*, 2 May 1982, Sec. D, p. 6.
- ² Julian Mitchell, "Athol Fugard in London," *African Literature Today*, 8 (1976), 132.
- ³ Alisa Solomon, "'Look at History': An Interview with Zakes Mokae," *Theater*, 14 (Winter 1982), 30.
- ⁴ Margaret Munro, "The Fertility of Despair: Fugard's Bitter Aloes," *Meanjin*, 40 (1981), 477.
- ⁵ These twelve plays do not include *Mille Miglia*, a television play; *Orestes*, an experimental theatre piece for which no script has been published; and *The Coat*, called "an acting exercise." See Athol Fugard and Don MacLennan, *The Coat and The Third Degree* (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1971), p. 7. After initial information in these notes, page references to Fugard's works will be given in the body of my text, where the following abbreviations will be used: *The Blood Knot*: BK; *Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act*: Statements; *The Island*: I; *The Coat*: Coat; *Sizwe Bansi Is Dead*: SB; *Tsotsi*: T; *Boesman and Lena*: BL; *Nongogo*: Non.; *No-Good Friday*: NGF; *A Lesson from Aloes*: Lesson; "MASTER HAROLD" . . . and the boys: Harold; *People Are Living There*: People.
- ⁶ Fugard is a controversial playwright, and there are those who disagree with the position advanced here that *The Blood Knot*, as well as other of Fugard's works, are anti-apartheid in tone. Some critics, for example, see *The Blood Knot* "as a racist work which shows up whites as preservers of civilization and blacks as primitive brutes who think with their fists." See Derek Cohen, "Drama and the Police State: Athol Fugard's South Africa," *Canadian Drama/L'Art Dramatique*, 9 (Spring 1980), 151. Mshengu believes that in the plays in which Fugard has not collaborated with blacks his "opposition to apartheid confines itself to an indictment of racialism, but not of the exploitive and destructive nature of capitalism as it operates in South Africa." Mshengu, "Political Theatre in South Africa and the Work of Athol Fugard," *Theatre Research International*, 7 (Autumn 1982), 171.
- ⁷ Athol Fugard, *Boesman and Lena and Other Plays* [*The Blood Knot, People Are Living There, Hello and Goodbye*] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 66.

- ⁸ Robert J. Green, "Athol Fugard's *Hello and Goodbye*," *Modern Drama*, 13 (September 1970), 139.
- ⁹ Mitchell, 136.
- ¹⁰ Athol Fugard (with John Kani and Winston Ntshona), *Statements: Three Plays [Sizwe Bansi Is Dead, The Island, Statements After an Arrest Under the Immorality Act]* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1974), p. 93.
- ¹¹ Cohen, 160.
- ¹² Mshengu, 171.
- ¹³ Athol Fugard, *Tsotsi* (New York: Random House, 1980), p. 12.
- ¹⁴ One need not share Mshengu's philosophy to agree with the statement that "Gangsterism is merely a facet of the majority's oppression. The real enemy is the oppressor [the white race]." Mshengu, 172-73.
- ¹⁵ "Introduction," *Boesman and Lena and Other Plays*, p. viii. Hereafter referred to in my text as *Introduction*.
- ¹⁶ Athol Fugard, *Dimetos and Two Early Plays [Nongogo, No-Good Friday]* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 76.
- ¹⁷ Derek Cohen, "A South African Drama: Athol Fugard's *The Blood Knot*," *Modern Language Studies: A Publication of the Northeast Modern Language Association*, 7 (Spring 1977), 76.
- ¹⁸ Robert L. Berner, "Athol Fugard and the Theatre of Improvisation," *Books Abroad*, 50 (Winter 1976), 82.
- ¹⁹ Frank Levy, "Fugard's *Boesman and Lena*: Physical and Metaphysical Exhaustion," *yale/theater*, 4 (Winter 1973), 73.
- ²⁰ See Mary Benson, "Fugard's *A Lesson from Aloes*: An Introduction," *Theater*, 11 (Spring 1980), 5.
- ²¹ Athol Fugard, *A Lesson from Aloes, Theater*, 11 (Spring 1980), 19.
- ²² Munro, 476.
- ²³ Solomon, 29.
- ²⁴ Athol Fugard, "*MASTER HAROLD*"... and the boys (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), p. 58.
- ²⁵ Mel Gussow, "Witness," *The New Yorker*, 58 (20 December 1982), 56.
- ²⁶ Mshengu, 177.
- ²⁷ See Mary Benson, "Athol Fugard and 'One Little Corner of the World,'" *yale/theater* 4 (Winter 1973), 55.